

**PREPARATION METHOD FOR PROTECTING THE BACK
SURFACE OF A WAFER AND BACK SURFACE PROTECTED WAFER**

ABSTRACT

The present invention relates to the preparation of a wafer that has front and back surfaces that are suitable for use in optical, electronic, opto electronic or micro mechanical devices. The wafer preparation method includes the improvement which comprises applying a cap layer proximate to at least a portion of the back surface of the wafer to facilitate handling of the wafer while protecting at least the back surface portion from damage. Advantageously, the cap layer can be applied proximate to the entire back surface of the wafer and along at least a portion of a side of the wafer that extends between the surfaces to fully protect the back surface of the wafer from damage during handling. In another embodiment, the method further comprises applying a top layer proximate to at least a portion of the front surface of the wafer.